

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, March 18, 1896, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1331 Connecticut Ave., Washington, D. C. March 18th., 1896. My dear Alec:

You asked me for my opinion as to what you should do when you complete your Western Tour, and I have given what I think an impartial showing of the reasons for your going to Baddeck or coming here, in as compact brief and clear a manner as I could. I might add that I would not willingly consider remaining here after the first week in May at the latest. I would have no object in doing so as my mother as well as yours will have left town. I have said all along that I was going back May 1st. and Mamma entirely approves. I would not object to your leaving at the close of the Academy Session somewhere about April 25th. and you would thus have more than 8 weeks in Baddeck before it was time for Philadelphia. I do not know just when your Father and Mother leave but certainly they never stay here through May and there would be no object in your coming here then. I can't understand why you seem to think that there is any question of my staying here through May and June. If you come now you could do a lot of work with Mr. Ellis and in May it would be too hot and he wouldn't be here if you sent him up. No, come back now. Elsie will be here on the 25th. for a fortnight's holiday and we would all have a good time all together by ourselves.

Thank you so much for your letters. They are very nice and I think you have a good deal to tell me. I am interested in your Parents Assoc's. and the teachers and hope that you will not find any more Miss Lockes.

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I was going out to play whist with your Father and Mother last night but Gypsey got me to show her my old journals and they were so intensely interesting that I staid on. I am so

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glad I kept them and after all I kept them long enough and through the most interesting periods of the children's lives and as it happens no very soul-stirring event has happened since. It is such a long time now since the hand of death has passed us by that I feel frightened. Carrie Blatchford is going now, I feel as if she were but leading the way. Let us keep all together as much as possible. You can't be with your father and mother when they go to Colonial Beach so you cannot help that but there is really no important reason why you shouldn't be with them through April. Come back.

Your loving, May.

FOR BADDECK

1. "With Mr. McCurdy in charge the records will be kept O.K. I have no doubt — and then it would only be necessary for me to run up after the lambs are all in — to give them their permanent numbers — and make selection of young rams. The sooner this is done the better for the lambs!"

"If you don't go up before the 1st. of June — then it will be necessary for me to run up to Baddeck myself to straighten out the flock."

SUMMARY

The matter resolves itself into this— that you want to go to Baddeck now to save 6 or 8 lambs a small part of the pain they must anyway suffer, 3 weeks later.

FOR WASHINGTON

1. "I want to see as much as possible of my father and mother this year"

I could name other reasons, as for instance the completion of the switch which can be done here, and cannot in Baddeck. The successful completion of this means greatly

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enlarged means of carrying on the laboratory at Baddeck, endowing the Volta Bureau which is suffering for lack of funds etc. etc..

The one chief reason seems, however, so powerful as to overshadow all others.

SUMMARY

Your father and mother are now here and well and anxious for your companionship and hurt that they got so little of it last month. They would certainly get more satisfaction out of your Society now while they are well and able to enjoy it than if one were ill and the other preoccupied with anxiety.

They will not be here towards the end of April and in May hence if you desire to “see as much as possible” of them you must come Now.

RESULT.

—THE CASE THUS STANDS. H—

A little extra pain to 6 lambs. versus the risk of never seeing your Father and Mother in health again and life long regret therefore.